



THE FUTURE OF



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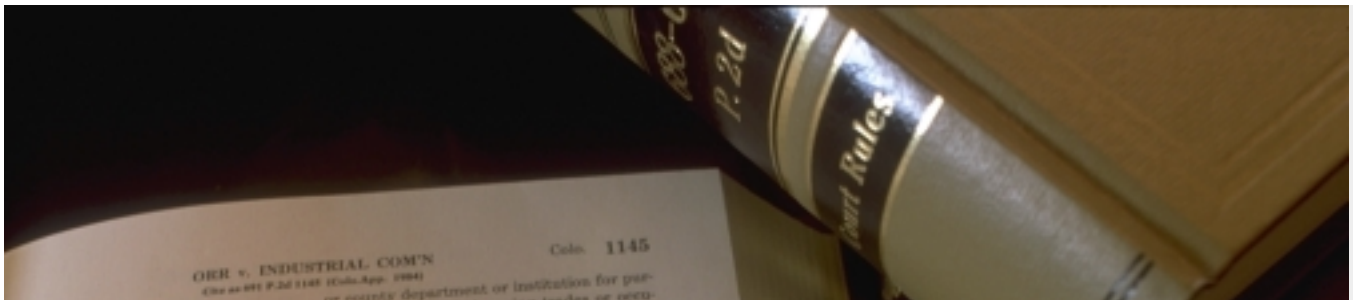
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INTRODUCTION

Over the past year, the Dacus Library Faculty have engaged in discussions about the changes and enhancements they would like to implement in order to make the Library more useful, modern, and user-friendly. The enhancements, presented in this report, fall under seven categories: Facilities, Technology, Cooperative Ventures, Services, Collections, Human Resources and Financial Resources. This document will not serve as an official strategic plan, however, until feedback has been garnered from those whom it would affect the most: the students, faculty, staff, and board of trustees. Dacus Library Faculty welcome and value the fresh perspectives these groups can bring in addressing the different areas.

The extent to which the Library will control and implement virtualization is an aim that unites many of the initiatives presented in this paper. The strategic plans introduced here are essential for the future success of Dacus, and, once finalized, will provide a framework allowing library faculty and staff to work not

only with a greater focus, but also to be more proactive as opposed to reactive.

In their discussions on the future of Winthrop Library services, faculty were careful to align their concerns closely with the Dacus Mission Statement, which states:

The Library will provide information quickly, efficiently, and in sufficient depth to promote the excellence of all academic programs offered by the university. It will provide the teaching that will guide students through the intricate maze of expanding information resources. It will also promote the sharing of library resources through statewide institutional cooperation.

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THE FUTURE OF FACILITIES

Provide the Winthrop community with a user-friendly and modern library building.

Dacus Library provides a prime location for individual and group research and computer access for those students without personal computers. Both technological and space challenges must be met, however, in order to meet future needs of the Library's users. These needs will be met with a new library building. For example, a new building could provide a large separate room, available 24/7, accessible from the outside while the rest of the building is secured. Computers for accessing the Internet and word processing programs, etc. would be available here.

A new library building is also vital to the continuing development of Winthrop University's community of scholars and provides access to information, not only for the Winthrop students, faculty, and staff, but for the York County region as

well. The physical library building provides a central source of access to print materials and a portal to the electronic materials and databases purchased by the Library. A new building will provide effective and appropriate temperature and humidity controls for the preservation of the collections and the comfort of the staff and users. In addition, appropriate storage areas and facilities for all types of collections (secure vault for valuable special collections/archival items, video and audio tape storage, etc.) are needed to assure that all of the Library's collections are accessible to its users. The library faculty and staff will work diligently for the funding of this new facility.

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THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY

Provide the necessary hardware and software to support new technology and provide appropriate training for library faculty and staff.

While technology is not the panacea, it is an essential aid to research. Providing excellent library services to Winthrop University's students and faculty requires regular upgrades to the Library's hardware and software. The library faculty and staff will work to have the budgetary resources necessary.

Changes in the publishing industry will require the Library to move to electronic versions of some publications. Much of the Reference collection (dictionaries, encyclopedias and handbooks) will be unavailable in print format and will be delivered only electronically. Periodicals, especially scholarly publications, indices, and abstracting services are moving to electronic format. These changes require state-of-the-art technology for access and efficiency.

Economics will also require the Library to prefer electronic to print publications in many cases. For example, when a periodi-

cal is supplied in full-text in a database such as *PsycArticles*, the Library will usually not be able to duplicate that title in paper format.

The Library will monitor all developments in technology in order to anticipate changes and to make the necessary preparations to provide for upgrades. Dacus personnel will be sent to appropriate conferences to learn about trends in library technology.

The Library's Web pages will be monitored on a regular basis to insure that necessary user-friendly changes are made. Furthermore, the Library will seek recommendations about its Web pages from its users.

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THE FUTURE OF SERVICES

Explore avenues to improve document delivery, on- and off-campus.

One of the most popular on-site services for users is Interlibrary Loan (ILL), or what is now called Document Delivery. This service is essential in providing access to information not housed in Dacus Library.

The Library will continue to work within copyright law to expand and augment document delivery to library patrons. The Library will also capitalize on its ILL software to increase electronic delivery of articles to patrons.

Maintain present library and reference desk hours and continue to use professional librarians to provide reference service.

The Library continues to have a steady level of traffic at the reference desk, and students have come to the Library in record numbers over the last year. Further, not only are the reference desk contact hours higher, more and more students are using the Ask a Librarian Service to confer electronically with reference staff about research strategies. As mounting

evidence of its popularity, over 200 e-mail reference questions have been received and answered since its inception in August 2001. The Library will also continue to pursue nontraditional methods of service, working toward 24/7 delivery of services to benefit on-site as well as off-site users.

Organize special promotions at the beginning of each semester to attract new users and former users who have "lapsed."

Marketing promotions such as Open House Day and the delivery of pamphlets will be implemented at the beginning of each semester to bring faculty, staff, and students into the Library. Many patrons, unaware of all the Library has to offer, harbor the miscon-

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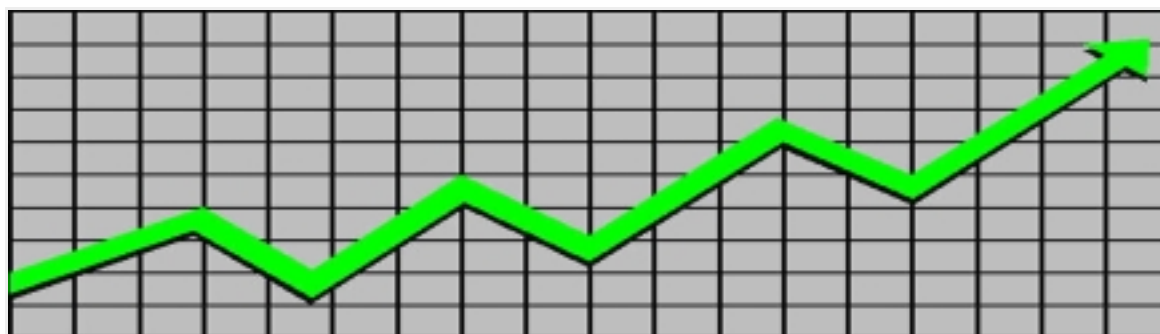
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THE FUTURE OF SERVICES

ception that the Library cannot service their research needs fully. The library faculty is eager to rectify this notion, and open them up to the world of information and services that Dacus Library offers.

Provide additional full-text databases and provide on-line research and help guides.

Perhaps the most important service to all users, including remote ones, is the full-text databases and on-line research aids. By providing virtual guides and granting access to more databases, students are empowered to begin their research (further consultation with a professional librarian will doubtless be required in many cases) whenever they want to, not just when the building is open. Library faculty will add new research aids and update existing ones, easily accessed through the Library home page.

Enhance instruction designed to improve research skills of faculty, graduate students and upper-level undergraduate students.

The library faculty will provide more library-use training for patrons wishing to avail themselves of it. Library instruction performed by Dacus Faculty is now more essential than ever for optimizing student success in using the Library; therefore, more priority will be placed on offering flexible scheduling for students and faculty alike. Library faculty will also design more customized training for upper division and graduate students. There may be increased instances of teaching only a few students at a time, or offering research strategies for students working on Masters theses.

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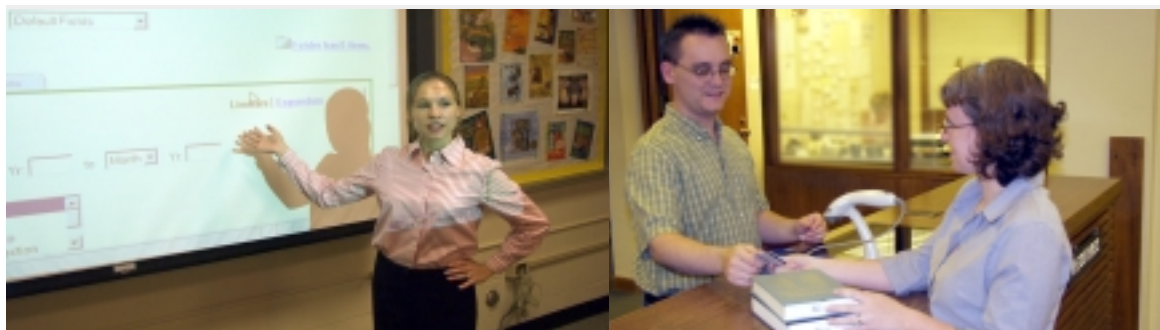
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THE FUTURE OF COLLECTIONS

Establish the Dacus On-line Catalog (DOC) as a main portal to information that supports the needs of the Winthrop community.

Information provided by the Library now includes both print and electronic resources. Access to indexing and abstracting services, full-text electronic information, digital collections, and the Internet are essential and must be provided in a seamless and user-friendly manner.

Purchase full-text electronic databases in disciplines and areas still lacking coverage.

Access to full-text electronic information which students and faculty can access from on- and off- campus is no longer an option, but a necessity. Regular review of current and developing programs and courses at Winthrop University will be undertaken to determine areas where full-text electronic coverage is needed. The databases to which Dacus Library currently subscribes will be monitored for usefulness to the curriculum. In addition, cost analysis and comparison to databases of similar coverage will continue to ensure that Dacus Library is being cost-efficient. The Library's criteria for choosing electronic access over paper are:

1. The database is stable.
2. The journals electronically offered are full-text and identical to the paper version. This includes all graphics and charts that can be reproduced via printing, e-mailing, and downloading.
3. An archive of the retrospective issues is provided.

Ensure the availability of funds when new programs and/or courses are added to the curriculum.

Dacus Library will monitor developing programs and/or courses and will request additional funding for materials to support the curriculum.

Develop a plan to incorporate the archive collections on-line.

The Archives collection is rich in the history and culture of the Rock Hill area and of South Carolina. This unique and valuable information will be added to Dacus Library's on-line catalog. For example, digital images of these manuscripts and archival documents are already being cataloged and added to DOC.

Evaluate materials, resources, and services to enhance the quality of the Library.

In addition to seeking both internal and external additional annual funding, the Library will evaluate resources against the current curriculum needs of the University. Purchasing patterns will be adjusted to reflect changes in the curriculum.

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THE FUTURE OF COOPERATION

Develop additional joint venture/consortial relationships with other libraries as well as with other university departments.

The Library will continue to develop consortial or cooperative arrangements with as many institutions as possible. Off-campus cooperative ventures will continue to make use of the state-supported DISCUS, which currently provides the Library with the *InfoTrac* database. Although DISCUS provides the Library with important research support, it is actually aimed at K-12 populations. This is why PASCAL (Partnerships Among South Carolina Academic Libraries) has been developed. It is hoped that PASCAL will provide Winthrop University with cost-avoidance measures that will greatly enhance its collections and electronic access. The Library will also continue to strengthen its work in the Charlotte Area Educational Consortium (CAEC). This consortium, now more than thirty years old, encourages cooperative resource sharing and buying among the Charlotte Metrolina area colleges and universities. The Library will also continue to work with

the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET) for delivery of a number of proprietary databases.

Further, Dacus Library will make better use of both in-house library liaisons and those who are appointed by departments. The Library will establish technology gurus and will work with these departmental designees to inform faculty better about electronically accessible resources.

The Library will investigate procedures of the Grants Office and Institutional Advancement to ensure that library resources are considered and reviewed as part of all departmental grant and fund-raising activities. The Library's faculty and staff have increased their grant-writing opportunities and will continue to further that activity as much as possible.

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THE FUTURE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Develop continuing education training for librarians and paraprofessionals to enhance their knowledge of services and resources.

Human resources are critical to library operations. By implementing continuing education of all staff, Dacus will provide for systematic enhancement of the knowledge and skills of the staff, truly achieving a consistently higher level of service. This aspect of service will be incorporated into the Library's mission statement. Grants and other external fund-raising opportunities will be explored, enabling the Library to augment what the budget already addresses.

Develop a mentoring program for faculty and staff.

Finally, a committee will monitor Dacus Library's continuing education efforts and oversee a formal mentor program for

any newly-hired faculty and staff. Without a well-informed, well-educated library staff, the Library cannot possibly keep pace with the many changes occurring in library services. The accelerated rate of change will also necessitate regular evaluation of the services the Library provides, and how it maximizes their effectiveness and efficiency. By addressing concerns with adequate training, library faculty and staff are certain to continue providing the excellent service that has always been the hallmark of Dacus Library.

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THE FUTURE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Develop stable funding sources that will supplement state appropriations.

If human resources are the most vital resource, financial resources follow as a close second. Funding for core services will continue to depend on state appropriations. Unfortunately, the prices of books, periodicals, and electronic materials increase at a higher rate than overall inflation. Often, increases in the materials budget do not fully cover the increases in costs. The lack of appropriate funding for only one year can have negative effects for years to come. For example, if during a weak budget year the Library is forced to cancel serial publications or database services, recouping them during the next strong budget year proves impossible. During the early nineties, severe budget constraints required the Library to discontinue certain key periodicals. More than a decade later, most of these periodicals still have not been replaced.

The reason for this is simple: dollars. The cost of keeping services at the level at which the Library now maintains them can be an expensive proposition. If the Library cancels several services in one year and then tries to pick them up a few years

later, the Library faces increased costs for resuming the services including back issues missed, plus any increase in cost owing to inflation. Thus, a service that was canceled at \$1,000 per year might cost \$2,000 to resume several years later. This illustrates why libraries cannot maintain services with stagnant budgets, but must increase their budgets each year *simply to maintain services*. To help combat this dilemma, the Library will also seek external funding.

To increase the annual budget through alternative funding, the Library will seek funding from sources such as private donors and grants. Over the last two years, grant writing by library faculty has increased significantly. By obtaining external funding, the Library will increase the budget to a level that will allow Dacus Library to better serve the Winthrop community and the York County region.

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CONCLUSION

In a document of such limited length, it is impossible to present or give equal priority to every idea and concept that was discussed. However, the faculty and staff of Dacus Library have made a good beginning toward laying the foundation for the Winthrop Library in the 21st century. No library is useful if it does not serve the constituency it was created to serve. Dacus Library serves that constituency already. What is needed for the future is to serve that constituency better. In order to meet this challenge, input from users—faculty, students, staff and others—is essential. Please help by sending your comments and concerns.

This report, based on extensive deliberations by the Dacus Library Faculty, was compiled by David Weeks, chair, Camille Livingston, Laurance Mitlin, Doug Short, Brittany Tant, and Gale Teaster.

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"A University is just a group of buildings gathered around a library."

—Shelby Foote, Historian

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